

PINON BOARDING SCHOOL, STAFF QUARTERS  
(Pinon Community School, Building 302)  
Navajo Route 41 North of Navajo Route 4  
Pinon  
Navajo County  
Arizona

**HABS No. AZ-162-B**

HABS

ARIZ

9-PIN,

1B-

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Western Region  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California 94107**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PIÑON BOARDING SCHOOL, STAFF QUARTERS  
(Piñon Community School, Building 302)

HABS No. AZ-162-B

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ARIZ  
9-PIN,  
1B-

**Location:**

Navajo Route 41 North of Navajo Route 4  
Piñon  
Navajo County  
Arizona

USGS Piñon Quadrangle (7.5)  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
12.569920. 3995300

**Present Owner:**

Piñon Community School Board  
P.O. Box 159  
Piñon, Arizona 86510

**Present Occupant:**

Abandoned. Chinde Building.

**Present Use:**

None

**Significance:**

The Staff Quarters (302) was built in 1935 and is an example of the Pueblo Revival architecture that characterizes most of the PWA reservation school buildings of that era. Because of a death in the north dwelling, Building 302 is considered a chinde building and has been abandoned.

## PART I. DESCRIPTION

**EXTERIOR.** Building 302 is a rectangular single story building containing three apartments; one one-bedroom unit and two two-bedroom units. [Fig. 1] The building is Pueblo Revival Style constructed of native Dakota sandstone. Wood lintels span above doors and windows, and wood canales lined with copper pass through the parapets to carry water off the flat roof. [Figs. 2,3]

**INTERIOR.** The walls and ceilings in Building 302 are painted plaster. Floors are wood and fireplaces in each living room are stone.

**MECHANICAL.** Each of the three apartments were heated by two natural gas fired vertical wall furnaces. Domestic hot water was heated by gas water heaters in each apartment.

## PART II. HISTORY

After a death in the north dwelling, the building was abandoned. It is considered a chinde hogan ("home of the dead") by the Navajos and must never be entered. Traditional Navajos believe it is taboo to enter a building where someone died or to even speak the name of the deceased.

Usually to prevent a person from accidentally entering a chinde hogan, the walls are pushed in, wood poles are placed in the doors and windows, or they are burned. Building 302 has been sealed with plywood.

A new complex of buildings has been designed for Piñon Community School which necessitates the demolition of Building 302. The new buildings have been sited to avoid the area occupied by the north dwelling, respecting Navajo customs.\*

\*Architect: Lescher and Mahoney/DLR Group; Phoenix, AZ

## PART III. SOURCES

Parman, Donald L. The Navajos and the New Deal  
New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976

Threinen, Ellen, 1981. The Navajos and the BIA: A Study of Government Buildings on the Navajo Reservation. American Indian Engineering, Inc./Bureau of Indian Affairs

Bulow, Ernest. Navajo Omens and Taboos

Other possible sources:

Indians at Work. Issues published from 1934 - 1936.

**PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION**

This survey is a mitigative recording required by a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the following parties:

Phyllis Badoni, Executive Director  
Piñon Community School Board

Tom Tippeconnic, Assistant Area Director  
Navajo Area Office, Navajo Area BIA

Jim Garrison  
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

Alan Downer, Historic Preservation Officer  
Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department

Robert Bush, Executive Director  
Advising Council on Historic Preservation

The survey documentation was completed in July 1993 by Lescher and Mahoney/DLR Group with the cooperation of the following:

Piñon Community School Board  
Bureau of Indian Affairs - Gallup Office  
Bureau of Indian Affairs - Albuquerque Office  
Arizona State Historic Preservation Office  
Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department  
David Sloan and Associates, Architects

Prepared by: Brett A. Hobza  
Affiliation: Lescher and Mahoney/DLR Group, Architects Phoenix, Arizona  
Date: July 1993

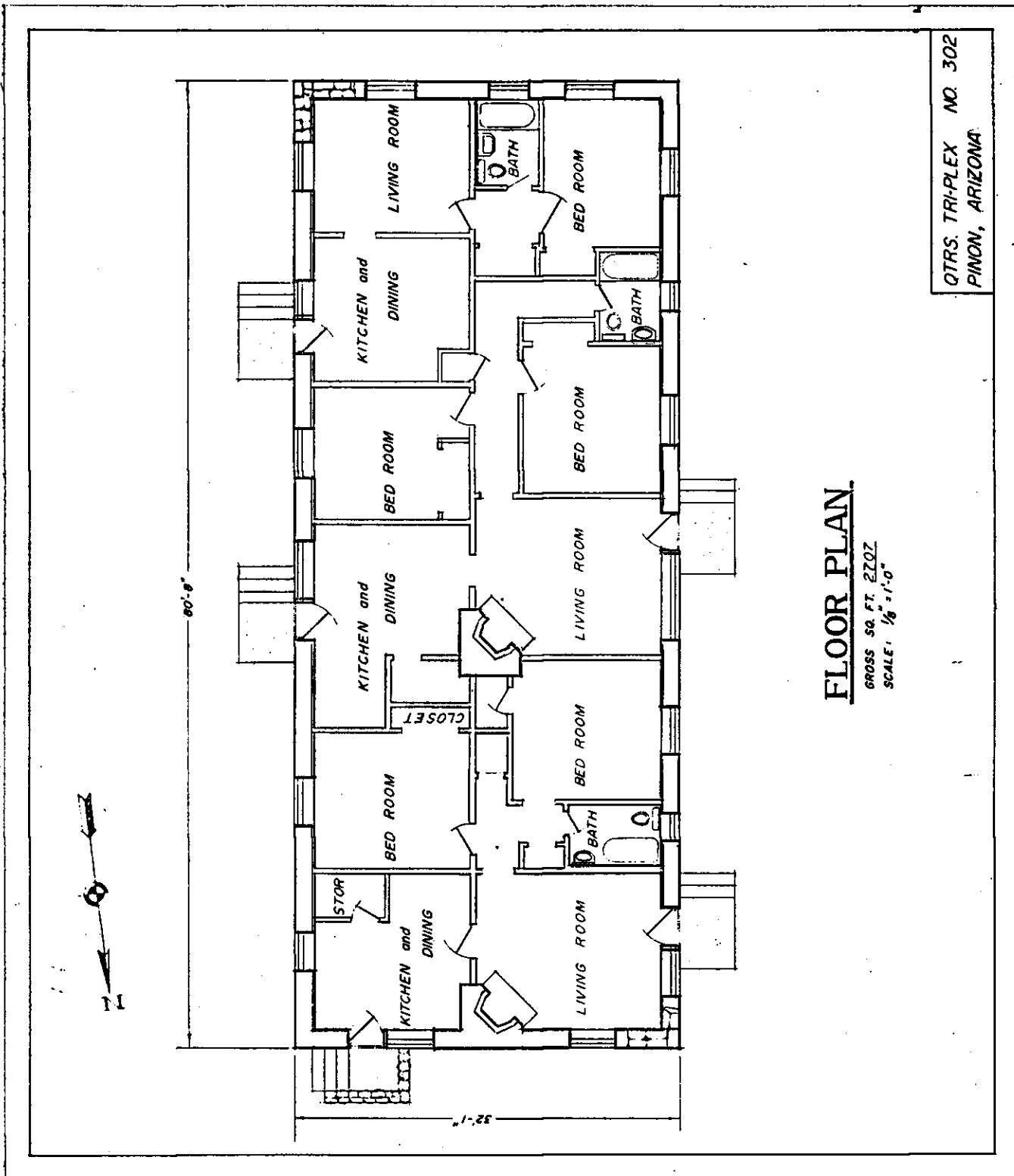
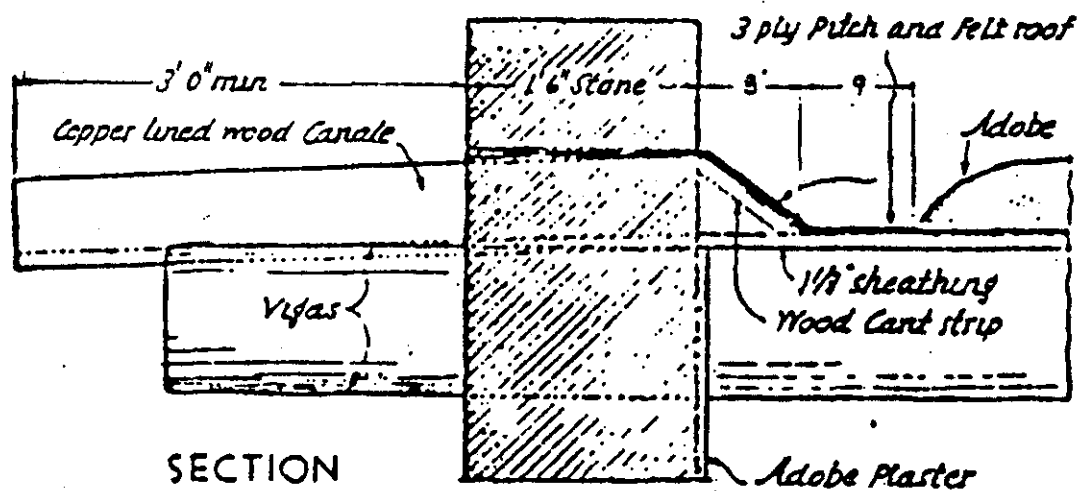
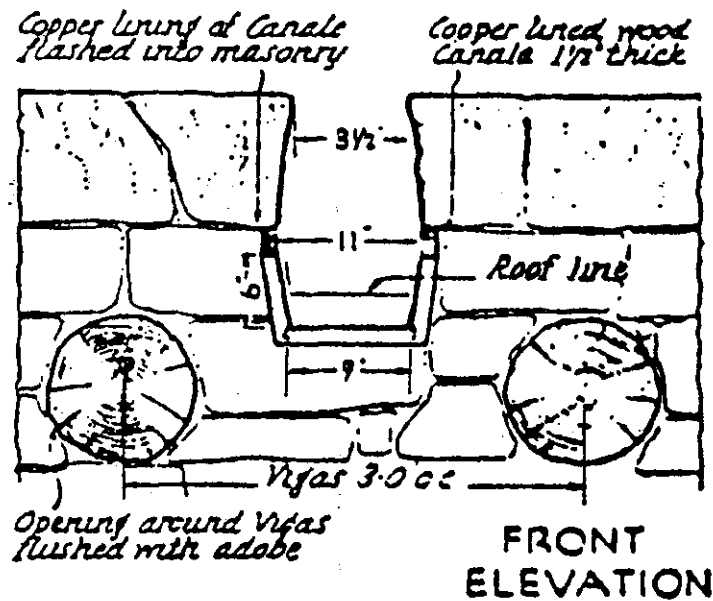


Figure 1. Floor Plan - Building 302



(NOTE: VIGAS OMITTED AT BUILDING 302.)

Figure 2. Parapet Detail

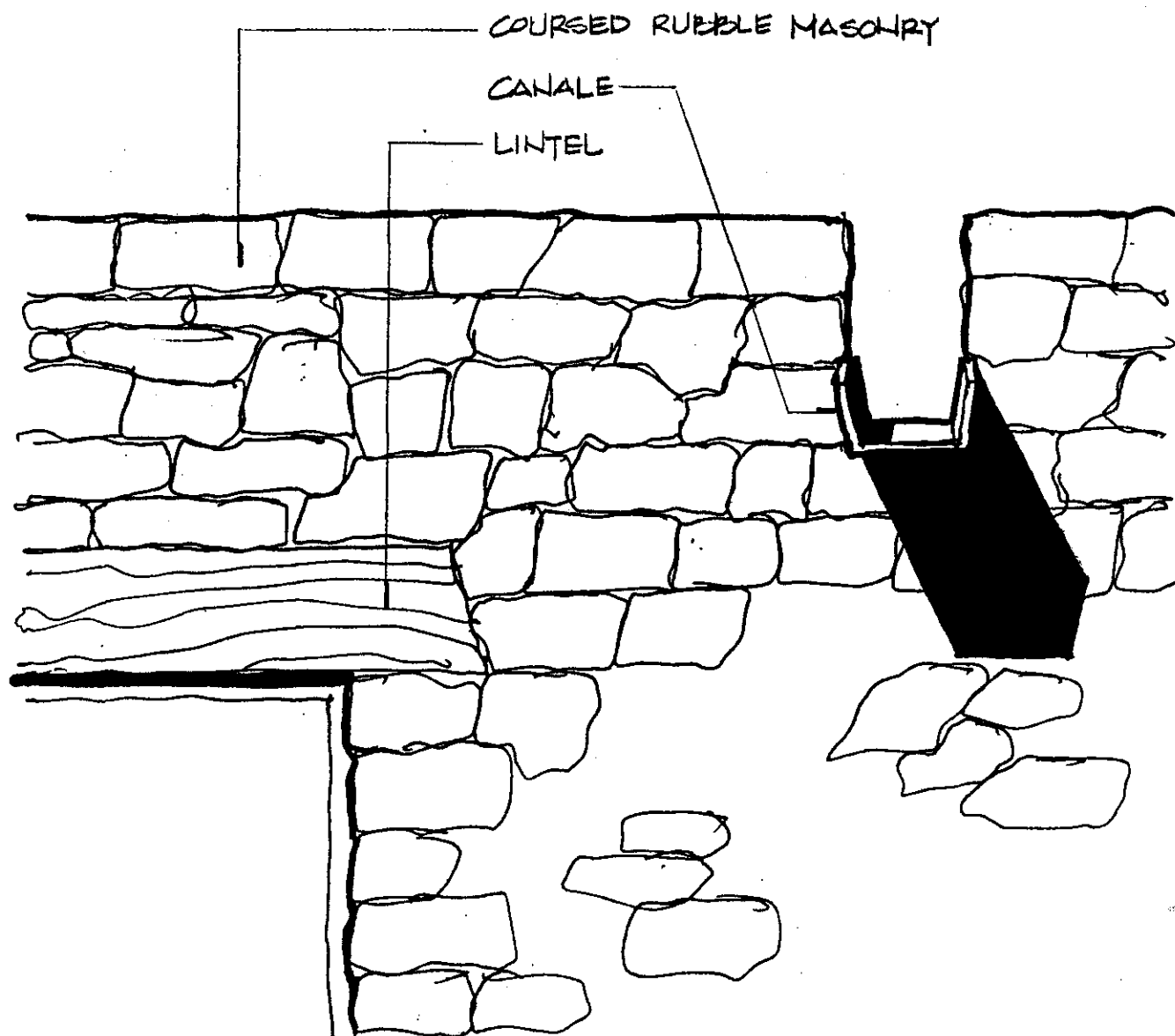


Figure 3. Elevation Detail - Building 302

DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATION (Pages 4-6)

PINON BOARDING SCHOOL,  
STAFF QUARTERS  
(Building 302)  
HABS No. AZ-162-B  
(Page 7)

- FIGURE 1      Photocopy of drawing (original drawing located at Bureau of Indian Affairs, Gallup Office).  
FLOOR PLAN OF BUILDING 302.
- FIGURE 2      Photocopy of detail drawings (reproduced from The Navajos and the BIA:  
A Study of Government Buildings on the Navajo Reservation).  
PARAPET DETAIL.
- FIGURE 3      Photocopy of drawing (original drawing located at Lescher and  
Mahoney/DLR Group, Phoenix Office). Brett A. Hobza, Delineator. June  
1993.  
DETAIL OF BUILDING 302 SHOWING MASONRY, CANALE, AND LINTEL.